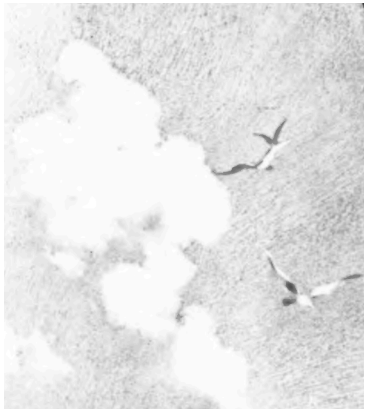
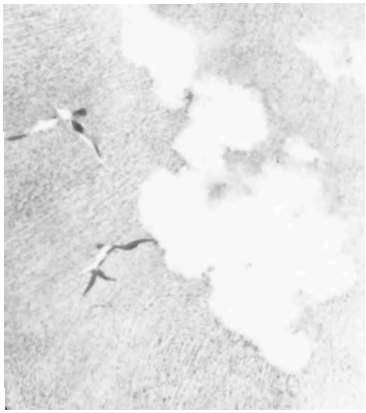


FORGETTING



andrés maldonado

art_irl [6] **winter /**

“forgetting” **4.11.2026**

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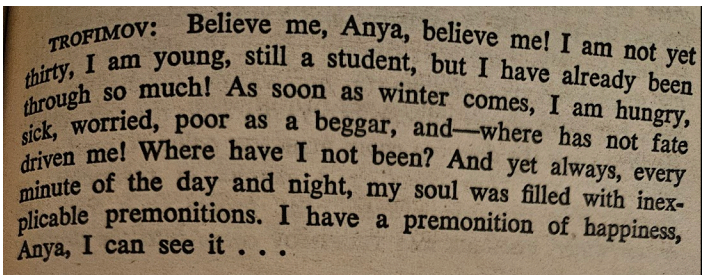
a maldonado [p. 1]



TROFIMOV: Believe me, Anya, believe me! I am not yet thirty, I am young, still a student, but I have already been through so much! As soon as winter comes, I am hungry, sick, worried, poor as a beggar, and—where has not fate driven me! Where have I not been? And yet always, every minute of the day and night, my soul was filled with inexplicable premonitions. I have a premonition of happiness, Anya, I can see it . . .

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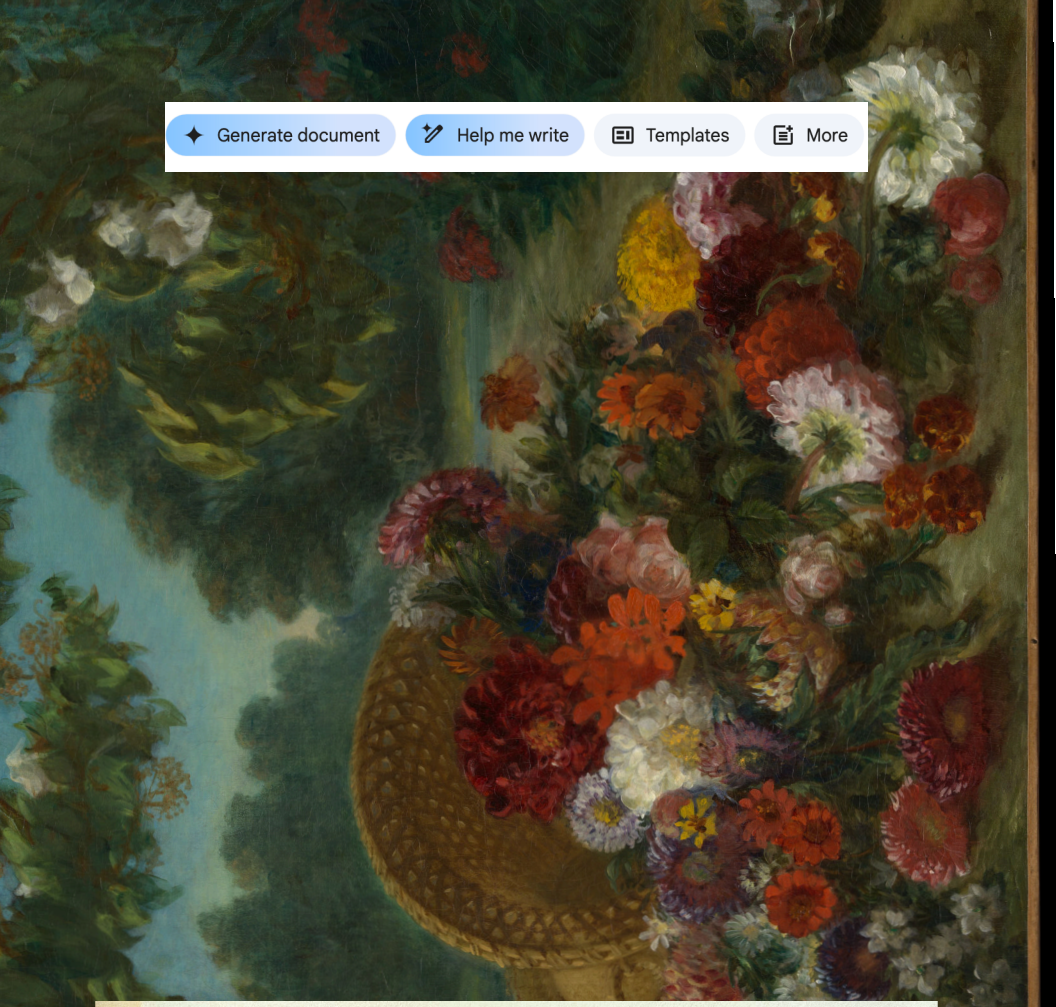

You think they can run a television station without ideas, without creativity, without talent? Do they think it will run itself? Do you think people are idiots? Ple-e-ase! The secret of success is intelligent effort, work accompanied by thought, self-criticism, a realistic assessment of the environment, and above all, demand. Not the paltry demand of profit but on the contrary, of youthful dreams that should never be abandoned. You have to know how to see beyond the interests of survival and make the decision to give something to the world, because only those who give, receive. And for that, you need imagination. The prose of business must express itself in the poetry of life.

JUNE 28, 2005

RACHEL CHOU

I have gaps in my memory, and that's what makes retelling this story so difficult for me. I can look back at my life in broad strokes, but the details and the moments only surface randomly as I live. A crisp breeze might remind me of my witch Halloween costume when I was twelve. A song might tussle me into a middle school classroom. A prickle from my knitting needle might flash a memory to chase: it was at our old house—no my Uncle's—I was six—I had just turned seven—I remember the feeling of looking at those trees, like an impressionist painting—the smell of the room, sinking into the plushness of that brown, floral sofa and looking for coins between the sections with small hands. I'm subject to the whims of my past at any moment.

I want to clearly narrate what happened yesterday, but even that is hazy to me, so technology *has* to intervene since *it knows everything about me anyways*.

It happened when I was walking back home from work. I live 2 trains away, half of a podcast, 3 pauses at stoplights from the office. 9.8 miles. This is my usual route. I was wearing my new shoes, excited to get home because they were pinching my feet. Excited because I was holding a heavy bag of groceries, rug burning the inside of my fingers. *Today at 12:40 p.m. you looked at a recipe for fish tacos—you spent 3 minutes and 23 seconds on the page*. Excited because most days at work feel the same and I didn't have to think about ways to suck the tit of business anymore. *You missed 13 notifications, 254 emails, and 0 calls*.

There was a man in front of me with a dog, a small mutt. As I was crossing the street on a yellow light rapidly turning red, suddenly a car tore down the bend. *The incident happened around 5:43 p.m. on Tuesday. An unidentified driver hit a 43-year-old man, who suffered from head injuries and was rushed to the hospital in critical condition*.

I watched as the man let go of the leash, lunging towards the driver for running a red light, or for whatever unperceived reason. The driver started

cursing at him. His dog, untethered, barking as his owner jumped onto the SUV with his hands gripping the right mirror and what he could of the door, his head in the open window, both men barking into each other's faces, cursing, screaming. The SUV gains speed, the owner falls off the car, a crack hits the sidewalk, his dog forgotten, as passersby gather to see if he is okay. He is not. His body is mangled, his arm bent back. He is breathing fast in a way you wonder if he's breathing some of his last. I look for the pool of blood under him but I can't get myself to look too close. *A 43-year-old man died on Tuesday after a hit and run. Police say the driver didn't stop, left the scene, no arrests.*

You wonder what the right thing to do in this situation is, being a witness, but I had the bag of groceries and seeing that an ambulance is coming, that his dog has been retrieved, I decided that I was useless just standing there and walked away. *Call with "Dad" lasted 5 minutes, 21 seconds. You said, Something really bad just happened in front of me on my way home from work and I'm really shaken. I think I just saw someone die. Dad said, It's my fault you're so sheltered. Worse things happen.*

When I got home, I dropped my groceries on the floor and curled up next to my fish taco ingredients. I thought about the way his body was twisted against the concrete. The short breaths. *Your heart rate was between 100 and 150+ beats per minute. You scrolled on your phone for 4 hours*. I thought about how my manager witnessed a stabbing in Brooklyn and when she told me about it over brunch, she told with the same attitude of regaling me about what she did over the weekend, like—we got ice cream and then a man got slashed in the throat. How was your weekend?

Worse things happen.

Worse things happen.

Antarctica, 77, 205 n.1.
Anthropocene, 38, 164.
Anxiety, 11–12, 34, 72, 133, 136, 168,
224 n.50. *See also* Fear.

Old Money Wanted will pay $100.00 for 1894 Dime, $50.00 for 1913 Liberty Head Nickel, $500.00 for 1870-CC Dime. Big premiums paid for all rare coins 1796 to 1964. Send 4c for Large Coin Folder. May mean much profit to you. **NUMISMATIC CO., Dept. 116, Ft. Worth, Tex.**

If You've Gotten Tired of Watching Curling, Imagine How the Athletes Feel

AP The Associated Press

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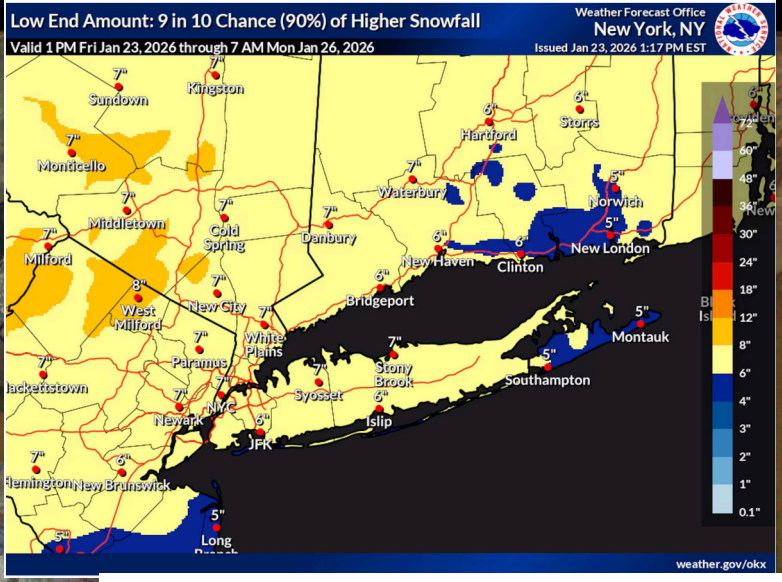
We tend to think utopias are unbelievable, but this is a sober-minded think tank focused on climate and energy politics. The report made little impact on the general public. Because the energy revolution has been incremental, there's been no single breakthrough moment. Yet, on the one hand, it adds up to an encouraging and even astonishing narrative. On the other hand, people find grim narratives all too believable, whether or not they are grounded in fact. We are still inundated by harmful, as well as untrue, stories about climate and the future. Prophecies can be self-fulfilling: if you insist that we cannot possibly win, you pit yourself against the possibility of victory and the people trying to achieve it.

Think How Differently Things Would Have Turned Out—



It's forecast to be so cold this weekend, you might be able to make a frozen bubble

NYC Mayor Zohran Mamdani warns it will be colder than it has been in 8 years

Bottom line: Patience will be the key to this spring. While conditions may be slow, cool, and wet in many areas, careful planning and close attention to local weather patterns can help gardeners and farmers make the most of the season once spring finally finds its stride.

Breaking News

Wind Chills Of Up To Thirty Below For Northeast

How much TiME ?

JULIE KOCSIS

I don't ever want to forget; I don't want a spotless mind.

But how much time until this feeling passes? I'll keep track on the calendar, crossing out the days with giant X's like I'm counting down to a vacation. Next Wednesday? Springtime? December of 2030? How much time until I'm able to come home and think of anything else? Until I'm able to walk to the kitchen or the bathroom or the bedroom and not think of you? How much time until I don't need to shove Kleenexes into my pockets everywhere I go? How many orders of takeout sushi do I need to eat before I stop thinking about how you used to paw at the chopsticks as I tried to eat? How many times do I need to sneeze and not wait for your meows to echo back at me afterwards? I never understood why you did that. Were you concerned about me? The way I was concerned about you every moment of the day since you arrived at my door. I always just wanted to make sure you were safe and healthy and happy.

How much more time before I stop looking for my shadow indoors? Before I stop anticipating your sudden, silent appearances as if you were the Cheshire Cat? Before I stop thinking about our old routines and start establishing new ones?

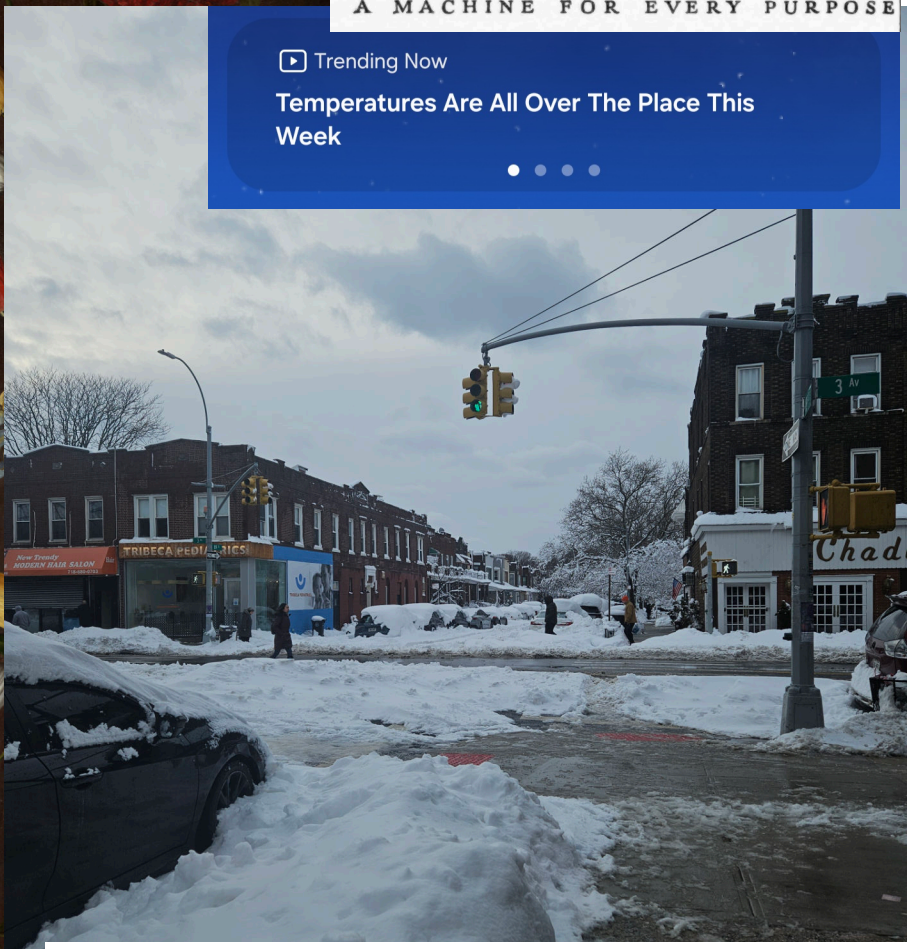
How much more time before I stop finding fur and toys and litter around the apartment? I took all your stuff—your little beds and your toys and your food and your tree—and I moved it to a closet and locked the door. It was staring me down. I'll figure out what to do with it when I'm better equipped.

How much more time until I'm able to see a pigeon resting in your favorite windowsill and not think of the little ek-ek-ek noises you'd have made as you slowly crept toward it? In your mind, I knew you imagined yourself as a lion or a panther, 20 times your actual size, stalking your prey on an African plain.

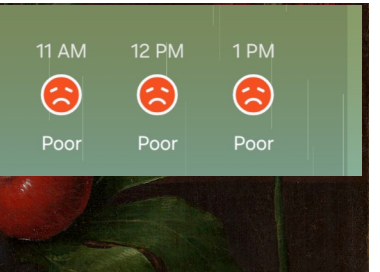
But as you shrunk in size, as your bones began to protrude and your muscles withered, I could feel a tiredness in you. A resignation. An acceptance of a reality that I myself could not accept. I was determined to reverse all this; to find the right vet, the right medicine, the right solution to bring things back to 2017. "Oh, take me back to the start."

When I returned home that night with your empty carrier, after I'd sobbed on the couch and then managed to clear my eyes for a few minutes, I started to clean. The area rug in the dining room you'd made into your bathroom the last few days was the first thing to go. But when I bent over, ready to start rolling up one of the rug's edges so I could carry it out to the trash, I spotted a tiny white object: a piece of fluff? A shred of paper? Upon closer inspection, I realized it was the front tooth you'd lost, root and all, a few months ago. I hadn't even realized you'd lost it until the vet pointed it out and assured me it wasn't uncommon among older cats. I assumed you'd swallowed it. I certainly didn't expect to see it again. Though I'm not typically one for finding "signs" in daily life—I'm too cynical for that (no, that's not Jesus burnt into your toast, it's a coincidence, so get over it), maybe this *was* something you intentionally left behind for me to find when I did? A symbol of protection should I ever need it. Or just a part of your physical being so I wouldn't forget you, as if I ever could.

In memory of Dolly
December 11, 2025



The best (though perhaps hardest) thing we could is to build our own infrastructure. This is part of what I wrote about in my last article about having a "punk rock" or "do it ourselves" ethos. If the old institutions are crumbling, that is also the perfect time to build new ones. I'm not saying this is easy. But, what choice do we have? Alternative literary infrastructure does exist. There are great indie presses, unique reading series, independent podcasts, and so on. The more the better though. Much of the mainstream and alternative infrastructures were eroded by the social media age. But, social media is itself dying now and is extremely susceptible to the slop flood. Now is the time to build bigger and better rafts.



A Forgotten Fragment

JULIA EPPES

Last year, I began the herculean task of transcribing my journals into digital format. After completing many years and hundreds of pages, I found myself closing the book on 2012. This contained the most painful of recollections—a disastrous relationship fueled by my misuse of alcohol, in which I hurt a kind person again and again. I repeatedly chose oblivion over the well being of someone who loved me. Its easily the most regretted aspect of my life. Conveniently, I'd forgotten many of the gory details.

Along with those painful memories, their context made me consider how the idea of forgetting applies to something you could never form a memory of in the first place. You don't "forget" something you did in a blackout—you could never have remembered it. The place in your brain responsible for forming long term memories is drowned, and you're rendered an ambulatory body without a participating mind. While you may appear drunk, it may not be evident to others that you're not actually there. You're rendered into a walking husk, yet still capable of inflicting very real heartbreak.

Though a common experience, its actually kind of a horror when you think about it. Done to excess, it causes a disjointed kind of life story, alternating between consciousness and unconsciousness. Your lived history is perforated by the limitations of your own recall—your sense of what happened, what kind of person you are.

Waking up and waiting to discover what everyone around you already knows is the scariest feeling. That looming sense of *what did I do* is nearly intolerable, until it is allayed into a relatively benign account or one that makes you want to reenter oblivion swiftly.

As for the relationship, this left me wondering: how much has he forgotten? I can only hope that he never kept a journal, or if he did, that he isn't undertaking a massive journal transcribing project, and that time has diminished his memory of me into nothing more than a negatively twinged haze.

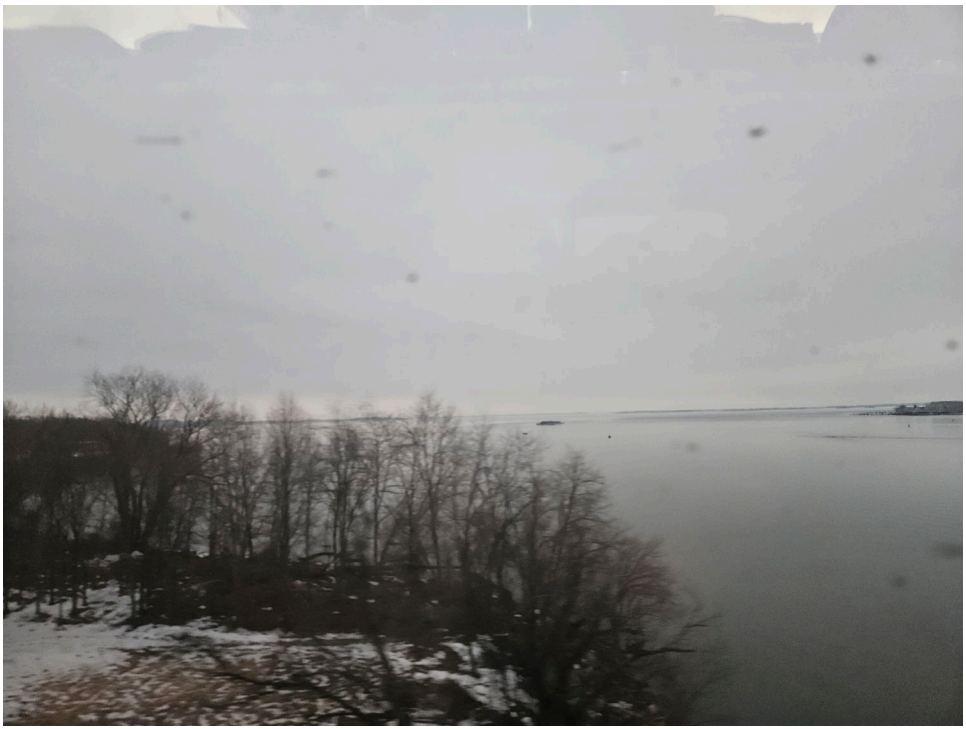
A particularly unfortunate forgotten fragment: in our senior year, I saw him at my freshman floor bar crawl. We acknowledged each other's presence but stayed well away from each other. At the following bar, someone bought him a particularly strong shot. He turned to me and said:

"I wouldn't wish this shot on my worst enemy. But you, on the other hand…"

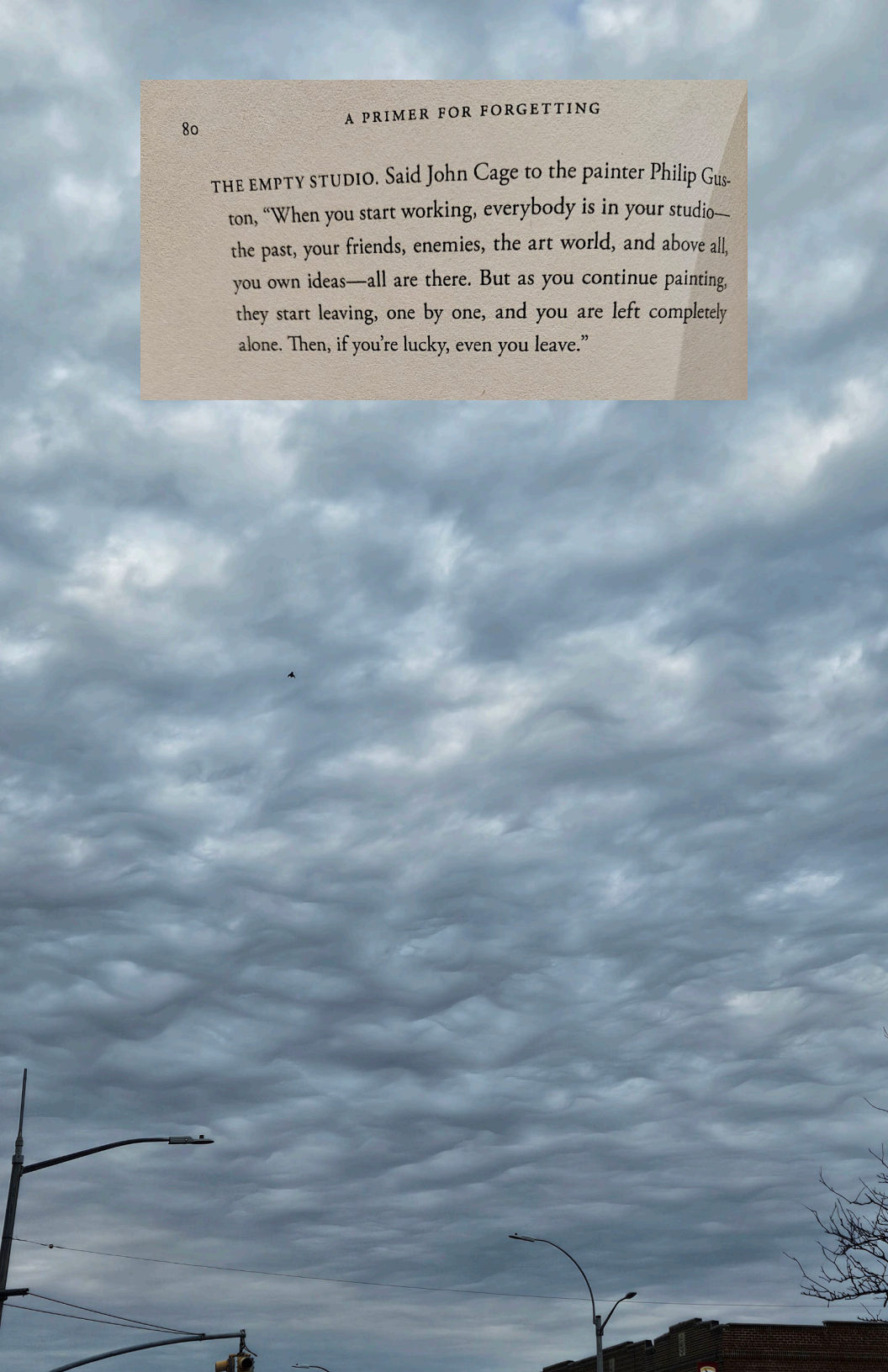
I never really considered myself to be enemy material. But was he referring to me, or the husk? It had to be the husk he hated. Surely, there was a good Me inside who was detached from all of this, not culpable, and surely everyone knew that. Right?

It's a convenient thing to believe. But with the me inside obliterated, it was surely hard for anyone to see her, and even harder for anyone to love her.

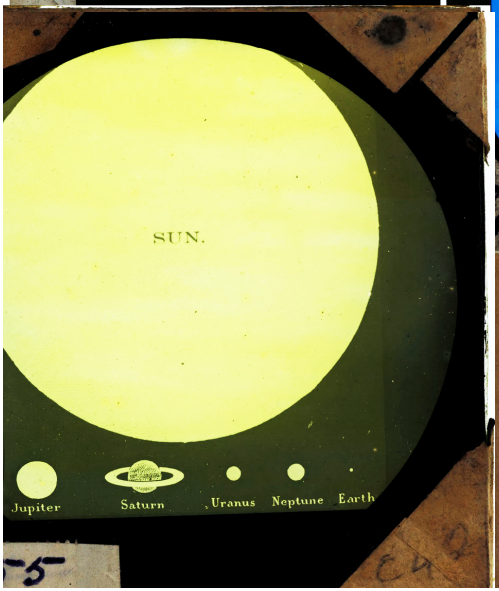
As was typical for the time, I was forcibly removed from the bar crawl at one of the following bars. The only evidence was a vague impression of being shuttled out to the steps and a tweaked ankle. I couldn't remember what happened, but I didn't forget it.

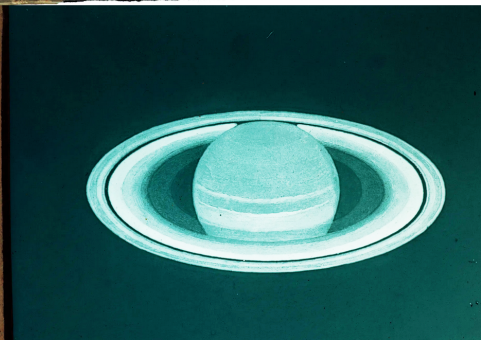


THE EMPTY STUDIO. Said John Cage to the painter Philip Guston, "When you start working, everybody is in your studio—the past, your friends, enemies, the art world, and above all, you own ideas—all are there. But as you continue painting, they start leaving, one by one, and you are left completely alone. Then, if you're lucky, even you leave."



The Grandeur of the Universe!





RAndoM REWarD

[excerpt from "the crossing"]

MARIAH EPPES

It was Friday, October 3rd. Not the 2nd. Ms. Law-Meyers had forgotten to update the calendar again. The Light in her classroom was glitchy, and while they waited for it to be fixed, Ms. Law-Meyers needed to change the date herself.

Ms. Law-Meyers was a very careless person, Ruby thought, as she deleted the number 2 on her Facet and replaced it with 3. The Facets at school were uglier and slower than the one she owned, so it took extra seconds for the correct date to appear. Yes, her teacher was very careless; especially for the last couple of weeks. Last Friday, September 26th, Ms. Law-Meyers had gone completely silent at the front of the classroom for a moment. Logan had snapped his fingers in the air, as if to awaken her, making the whole class giggle. Ruby thought Logan was cruel. He ridiculed Ms. Law-Meyers constantly. But it would be easier to feel bad for Ms. Law-Meyers if she wasn't so easy to ridicule.

Still, Ruby always found a way to activate her empathy, even for those who brought their circumstances onto themselves. Empathy, fear, secondhand embarrassment—all of these things were right below the surface of Ruby's glassy exterior.

So she approached Ms. Law-Meyers before class began (Ruby was always in early, working on the daily activity while her classmates trickled in) and told her that the date was wrong.

"Oh, thank you, Ruby," Ms. Law-Meyers said, rising from her chair in a graceless, flustered way that made Ruby embarrassed. "I can't believe it. It's fifth period. No one said anything all day!"

No one said anything all day! Ms. Law-Meyers's credulous words remained in Ruby's head as she took her regular path home after school. There was something irritating about carelessness, and about Ms. Law-Meyers's form of it, that Ruby couldn't put her finger on. It was in her classmates too. Not one of them noticed the date was wrong. Or, if someone did notice, they did not bother to intervene. There appeared to be two kinds of carelessness. The kind that made you *forget* to update the calendar and the kind that made you *indifferent* to the date on the calendar.

Still annoying, Ruby thought.

She walked down the wide fluorescent hallway toward the back doors by the gym, where a line of old school buses waited for a mass of her peers. She felt mired in these annoyances as she stood in the crowd waiting for the fourth bus to lumber up and open its doors.

A small window to the world had to be cut through her feelings in order to assess the seating situation. They were practically three to a seat these days—there were so many kids—and Ruby felt most comfortable if she could be at the aisle end, even if she had to sit on the very edge of the seat. The kids ahead of her scoped out seats, claiming them as quickly as possible. Ruby's heart quickened as the bus filled up, she was helpless when waiting for her turn to sit. This was a terrible part of the day, she thought, one of the worst—until, relief: an aisle seat, available next to two girls who were best friends, and huddled together, giving Ruby more space.

Having secured her seat, Ruby could close the window again, and sink comfortably into her ruminations.

The bus dropped her off six blocks from her house. A handful of other students got off at the same stop with her. Those kids had shared her neighborhood for years, but she didn't know any of them well enough to be accompanied on the way home. When Ruby was younger, she hadn't thought much about this. But since starting high school, she'd realized that somewhere in these years she had become a sort of outcast.

This did not entirely surprise her. She knew her parents had provoked a reputation for themselves. Or, at minimum, they had cultivated an aura that encouraged their neighbors to avoid them. Logically, Ruby had this aura all over her. She could expect to be treated the same way. (Unless she could find a way to do her own laundry, outside the house, she sometimes mused.)

The house in Ruby's musings was one level: a kitchen, adjacent living room, bathroom, and a single narrow hallway with two bedrooms at the end. Ruby technically shared her room with her little brother, but on most nights his bed was empty—he liked to sleep on the couch.

Ruby was the only member of the family who left the house every day. Ruby's father didn't work, Ruby's mother worked at home, and it was unusual for Ruby's brother to get to his school five times in a row. Jasper was only twelve, but he was exceptionally cruel. Even crueler than Logan. Occasionally, he could be almost amenable (Ruby considered what it might be like to love him on days like that). On bad days, he screamed at

her, at her parents, or at nothing in particular. Everything in particular, Ruby thought. Ruby came to see even his occasional congeniality as nothing more than a taunt.

Once, in eighth grade, Ruby had told a classmate that her little brother was evil, and the classmate had taken offense. "There aren't really evil people, especially kids," said the girl. "They *turn* evil. Something happens to them."

"Nothing ever happened to him," Ruby said.

"You have to be nice to him, and he'll learn," said the girl.

Ruby tried to be nice to Jasper for this girl's sake. It didn't work. In no time at all Jasper caught on to Ruby's unusual behavior and took due advantage. He was now the exclusive owner of several of her personal items—matters of ownership were always strictly enforced with Jasper. He'd also tricked her into doing some menial chores his parents had assigned to him as a punishment for another trick.

Ruby thought her parents were probably to blame, just like they were for the whole family's ostracization. But there weren't many solutions available with that information. Her parents had their preoccupations, but they weren't hurting anyone. Jasper just enjoyed being cruel.

When she came in the door, Ruby's parents were at the kitchen table, poring over their Facets. There must have been a transmission from Helia to decode. Last week, *We are warm and all is good* had occupied them for the whole weekend. Jasper was not present: a relief, he was probably in their bedroom, since the door to that room was closed.

This was the best case scenario for the afternoon. Her parents would be immersed for some time, hopefully, and Jasper was unlikely to show his face for a few hours.

Ruby could relax.

She shed her backpack and jacket and shoes as quickly as she could, so as not to lose any precious time. She could work on homework later, when her family members shifted their positions. When possible, it was nice to get some time with the big Facet in the living room. Especially today. She'd been daydreaming about a game during school. It looked much better on the big screen.

Impxssible Excursixns was a world-exploration game. Since she'd first started playing, Ruby had worried her parents were going to ban her from it. Surprisingly, they hadn't taken much notice. Maybe it had something to do with the obvious fantasy of the "worlds." They were technically other

planets, but the game did not take place in space. It was not one of the many games where you could fly a ship through the galaxy; not one of the games where you could play as a settler on a fake-Helia. You just unlocked worlds and wandered around them, completing quests and missions and collecting rewards.

Today, Ruby's character traversed a rather empty, orange desert environment. Periodically she came upon a glistening statue, which she could swipe at with her weapon (for the moment, a massive hammer), and receive a random reward as it exploded. The statues themselves were becoming repetitive, one of three shapes. The desert spread out into the distance. On the horizon line was another planet, looming grandly, but she could get no closer to it.

This game gave Ruby a bizarre feeling. Despite the monotony and repetition, she was deeply content. More than content: how to describe it? She felt like she had become the couch. She was textile; she had a heavy metal frame; she was anchored in place. So far *Impxssible Excursixns* was the best way to induce the feeling. The hour-count had ratcheted up past the other games on her Light profile.

She had unlocked fourteen out of the fifteen possible random rewards. But even receiving the same reward, over and over, was satisfying. The menu kept a counter of how many times she had found each one. Watching the number go up gave her a sense of accumulation. She knew she liked to keep things, but had long ago cut her attachment to anything Jasper could get his hands on. And that was almost every item in their house. This was one way she could feel better about the ill-fated attempt at kindness: those personal items, the ones Jasper now owned, hadn't meant much to her anyway.

Of course, that got her thinking. If she had always held on to that self-preserving exit, had she *really tried* to be kind?

She could get caught in that spiral of thoughts. Luckily, she had had Ms. Law-Meyers to think about today. And the afternoon would be okay, because couches did not think.

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further reading:

"a prophet of the weather: lantern slides by clement lindley wragge (ca. 1900–22) '" by hunter dukes, *public domain review*

image sources:

lantern slides by clement lindley wragge

"basket of flowers" by eugene delacroix, 1848-49 (oil on canvas)

"fruit and flowers" by orsola maddalena caccia, ca. 1630 (oil on canvas)

"a women seated beside a vase of flowers" by edgar degas, 1865 (oil on canvas)

cover image:

life magazine, sept. 4, 1924

text sources:

p. 2 / "the cherry orchard" by anton chekhov

p. 3 / *dinner* by césar aira

p. 6 / *no straight road takes you there* by rebecca solnit

p. 11 / "surf's up in slop city" by lincoln michel [*counter craft* newsletter]

p. 14 / *a primer for forgetting* by lewis hyde

how to print & bind this zine at home:

materials, programs, tools:

- 6 sheets of regular printer paper
- 3-4 new staples
- a pushpin, awl, or other tool to make a small hole
- adobe acrobat reader (free) or other PDF reader that can print in "booklet" mode
- optional: an x-acto knife, to trim the edges

instructions:

- open the zine PDF in acrobat. go to file > print. under "page sizing and handling," choose "booklet."
- the zine will appear to print in a jumbled-up way. take the sheets from the printer in exactly the order they were printed. if you fold the whole stack in half, you'll notice that the pages are in order. don't fold it yet, though!
- being careful to keep the sheets in order, fold each page individually (to get the best crease). you can use the blunt edge of a butter knife or a bone folder to crease it well.
- now we're going to create the holes, where we'll push in the staples to bind. you can be as precise as you like with this step; using a ruler to ensure that every staple is at an equal distance on every sheet, or just using the staples themselves as a measuring tool and eye-balling it. mark where the holes should go with a pencil. 3-4 staples along the crease should be enough.
- use a pushpin or awl to poke holes through each sheet. you can do this individually sheet-by-sheet, or use a binder clip to hold the sheets together and do them all at once.
- when all the holes are ready, align the holes of each sheet and press the staples through. feed the staples through the holes from the backs of the sheets, so that the prongs of the staple are on the inside of the crease. (the flat backs of the staples will be on the spine of your zine.)
- when staples are through all the sheets, use the blunt edge of a butter knife of a bone folder to fold down the prongs of each staple.
- fold the zine, and use the blunt edge on the spine crease a few times for good measure.
- optional: using a ruler and an x-acto knife, trim the uneven edges of the booklet.